

August 2025

# The Generals Post

*Anthony Wayne Local Schools Stakeholder Newsletter*

## Welcome to a New School Year: We're Ready to Plant Seeds of Learning!

As we begin another school year at Anthony Wayne Local Schools, I'm filled with excitement for the season ahead. Like farmers preparing their fields each spring, we're planting seeds of learning, growth, and opportunity—seeds that will take root and thrive in the months to come.

Every student who walks through our doors holds potential waiting to be nurtured. And like a well-tended field, that growth depends on the right conditions. At Anthony Wayne, we believe a strong school system is some of the richest soil for young minds—and it takes an entire community to cultivate a meaningful harvest.



Just as root systems of plants intertwine to provide stability for growing plants, AWLS is fortunate to have a strong network of students, staff, families, businesses, and neighbors providing the foundation of our success. Gratitude is the sunlight that fuels our work, and we're deeply thankful for your support and belief in our mission to empower students to be future ready.

We have a history of deep-rooted community pride in our schools, and we are committed to upholding the tradition of excellence that makes AWLS one of the premiere school districts in the state - and makes us all glad to be a General. Thank you for all you do to help us be fruitful in our pursuit to educate the children of our community.



Here's to a year of planting, growing, and harvesting success—together.

Sincerely,  
Kevin Herman, Superintendent

## Growing Together: New Community Engagement Efforts

This year, we're launching a fresh approach to building stronger relationships, deeper trust, and broader collaboration across Anthony Wayne Local Schools. Inspired by the theme "Planting Seeds and Putting Down Roots So We Can Grow," our expanded outreach efforts are grounded in the belief that meaningful progress begins with intentional connection—and grows through shared care over time.

We will share more information in future newsletters, but here's what you can expect:

- Wider community outreach to connect with those who support and care about our schools, including those without students currently enrolled.
- More opportunities to get involved and support students through a new District foundation.
- New ways to make your voice heard and participate in conversations that shape our schools' future.

Whether your relationship with the District is just budding, or if you're a perennial supporter, you are an essential part of our school community. We invite you to get involved, share your ideas, and help us create a thriving, connected district—together.



### SAVE THE DATE

## WALK&TALK

*with the Superintendent*

**Tuesday, August 12 ■ 9:00 a.m. ■ AWHS**

Lace up and learn what's new at Anthony Wayne Local Schools! Join superintendent Kevin Herman for a walk around Campus while you get answers to your most pressing questions about the district.

Open to all community members, we hope you will join us for this opportunity to share your ideas and suggestions with us!



## Connecting and Communicating

### District Website

Updated several times weekly, our website serves as the main source of District information and news.

### Mobile App

A mini-version of our website, you can quickly access calendars, menus, athletic tickets and key contacts on the go. Push notifications let you know when a news story has been published.

### InstantConnect Messaging System

We use Bright Arrow's InstantConnect messaging system to share information with families via email, text and phone call. Parents, please keep your contact information up to date [in FinalForms](#) so we can reach you.

#### **SYSTEM TEST: Wednesday, Aug. 13 at Noon**

Parents/guardians will receive a test email, phone call and text message from the InstantConnect system. [You may report errors here.](#)

### Social Media

See photos and videos and read about the activities and accomplishments of our students, staff and alumni. New stories are posted several times each week. Follow along!

**NEW!**



Instagram



X (Twitter)



YouTube



LinkedIn

### Encourage your neighbors to subscribe to this newsletter!

If you know someone who does not receive The Generals Post, please encourage them to register their email address online by visiting [www.AnthonyWayneSchools.org/Communications](http://www.AnthonyWayneSchools.org/Communications).

## Who to Contact

### General Questions

The Main Office of each building is a great place to start for answers to most of your questions.

### Academic Progress & Behavior

Questions and concerns about your child's day-to-day, classroom-related activities can be addressed by contacting your child's teacher, with additional support available from the school counselor and/or principal.

### Departmental Contacts

If you have a specific question or want to offer a suggestion and are not sure where to turn, our District Directors are happy to assist you.

### DISTRICT DIRECTORY

Visit the Contact Us webpage for general phone numbers and a search-by-name directory.





## Anthony Wayne Local Schools Board of Education

Shellie McKnight, Member  
Jeff Baden, Vice President  
Kyle Miller, President  
Lindsay Hoipkemier, Member  
Mike Stamm, Member

**Learn more about  
the members**



## Board of Education Updates

The AWLS Board of Education invites all stakeholders to be an engaged member of our school community. Meetings are open to the public and are [live-streamed and recorded](#) for those who cannot attend in-person.

### Highlights from the July 16 meeting:

District Treasurer, Kerri Johnson provided an [overview of the District's finances](#) at the close of FY25. More details are on the next page.

Operations Director, Neil Raymond provided an [update on several permanent improvement projects](#) taking place throughout the District this summer. [Project information and photos are available on the District website.](#)

Director of Teaching and Learning, Jim Conner shared that [grade cards for primary students are being simplified for clarity](#) while maintaining detailed progress reporting and former AWHHS Principal, Kevin Pfefferle shared information about graduation requirements and the accomplishments of the Class of 2025.

Superintendent Kevin Herman announced that [a new District foundation is in early planning stages](#) to support academics and activities.



**View the meeting recording**



**Contact the Board**

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS

Thursday, Aug. 7	8:00 a.m.	Monday, Oct. 13	6:00 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 15	6:00 p.m.	Monday, Nov. 3	6:00 p.m.

# Treasurer's Report

As we close out another fiscal year, inflation and rising costs continue to be a major factor facing the District's budget. Like many households we are making ends meet, but we continue to operate on a slim margin, with a cash balance of only 4.6%.\*

As always, we are closely monitoring our revenue and expenses - with a focus on ensuring that all financial decisions are in the best interests of our students and our taxpayers.

More financial updates will be shared as they are available.

## Fiscal Year 2025 Overview

### TOTAL REVENUE: \$49,711,304

Real Estate Taxes	\$35,675,682	72%
State Aid	\$8,131,703	16%
Other Local Funding	\$5,885,592	12%
Non-Operating Revenue	\$18,327	0%

The District saw a \$2.9M revenue increase from:

- increases in state funding
- state reimbursement - Science of Reading training
- property tax revenues
- payments made by the NEXUS pipeline.

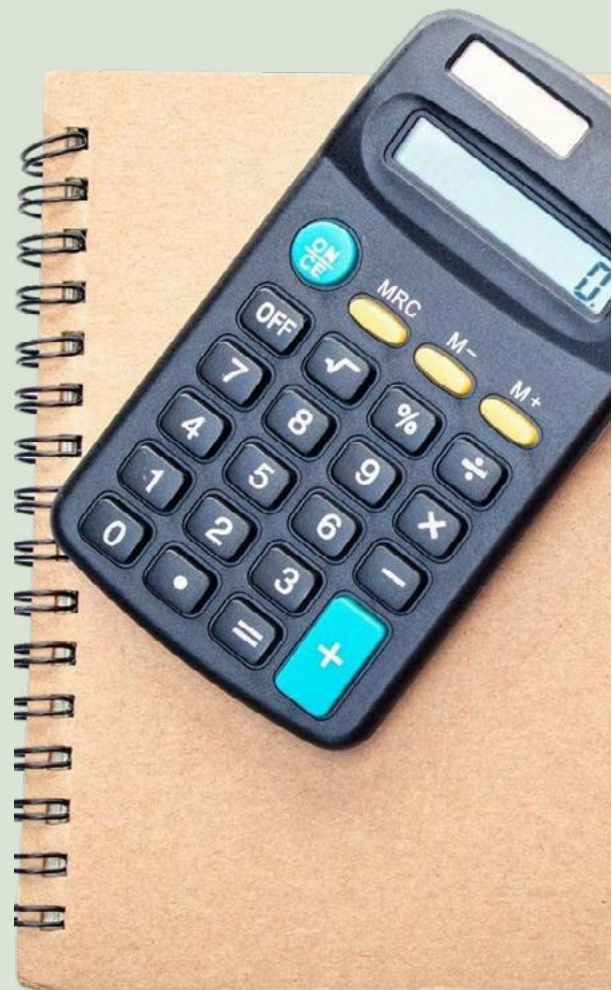
### EXPENSES: \$49,425,968

Salaries	\$31,055,7584	63%
Benefits	\$10,782,572	22%
Purchased Services	\$5,861,660	12%
Supplies & Materials	\$916,279	2%
Other	\$809,673	1%

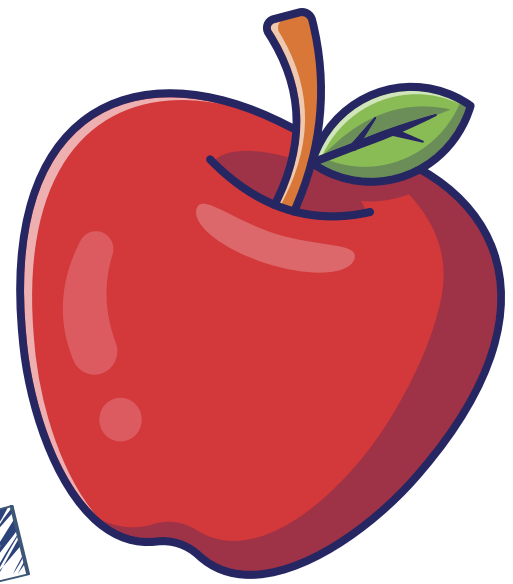
District expenses are increasing due to rising costs for:

- contracted services for student support
- salaries and health benefits
- supplies and materials

\*AWLS is one of only 16 districts in the state with a cash balance under 10%.



# BACK TO SCHOOL



## Welcome Back Students & Families

The countdown to the first day of school is on, and we are looking forward to welcoming our students back to class. It's going to be a great year of learning and growing together. Here are a few helpful reminders as you prepare for the new school year. Visit [www.AnthonyWayneSchools.org/Back to School](http://www.AnthonyWayneSchools.org/Back to School) for more information.

## Returning Student Registration

The online Returning Student Registration process allows families to complete annual paperwork, update contact details and receive important information from AWLS. If you have not already done so, [please log in to your child's FinalForms account](#) to complete this important process before Registration Day.

## Registration Day

The first official event of the school year, Registration Day is when students and families will pay fees, have school photos taken and pick up class schedules and bus route information.

Primary Schools	Monday, Aug. 11	12:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Campus Schools	Tuesday, Aug. 12	10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

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## Reminder: Check Your Tech

Students were permitted to keep their school-issued Chromebooks during summer break. Please locate, charge fully and make sure your child's device is working properly. If you discover problems, please [email the Technology Department](#) or call 419-877-1221 ext. 5 for assistance.

## Open Houses

Students and families can deliver school supplies, meet their child's teacher, walk their class schedule and reconnect with classmates during our Open House events on Thursday, Aug. 14.

Monclova, Waterville and Whitehouse Primaries	5:00 - 6:30 p.m.
Fallen Timbers Middle School (5th Grade Only)*	6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
AW Junior High School	6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Anthony Wayne High School	7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

\*6th grade students and their families are invited to an Open House from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 18.

## First Day(s) of School

AWLS begins school on a staggered start schedule, allowing students at key transition points to settle into their new schools without the hustle and bustle of the full student body.

Monday, Aug. 18

Grades 1-4, 5, 7 and 9 + Kindergarten Readiness Testing by appointment

Tuesday, Aug. 19

All students in Grades 1 - 12 + Kindergarten Readiness Testing by appointment

Wednesday, Aug. 20

First day of school for Kindergarten Students

## School Transportation

Your child's bus route information will be available in the PowerSchool Parent Portal at the end of the day on Monday, Aug. 11. Please plan to be at your assigned bus stop a few minutes early, particularly during the first few weeks of school as families and bus drivers settle into their new route schedules.

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## Reminder: Managing Medications

New medication forms must be completed each school year. These may be found in the school offices or [downloaded from the District website](#). Medication must be brought into school by a parent/guardian. [More information is available in the Nurse handbook](#).

# Schedules and Calendars

## 2025-2026 District Calendar

Plan ahead with an overview of important dates, including parent-teacher conferences and holiday breaks.

## AWLS Events Calendar

See what's happening across the District, or filter by school and add events directly to your own Google calendar.

## Building Schedules

Find the daily start and end times, lunch periods and classes for each school.

## Cafeteria Menus

See what's cooking for breakfast and lunch.

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## Back-to-School Social Activities for Students

### Cedar Creek Back to School Bash

All Anthony Wayne students and families are invited to celebrate the start of a new school year at Cedar Creek - Whitehouse Campus from 10:00 a.m. - Noon on Saturday, Aug. 9. Drop in for lunch, ice cream, school supplies and lots of fun!

### Fallen Timbers 5th Grade Ice Cream Social

The AWPTA invites incoming 5th grade students to meet their classmates at Generals Ice Cream from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 8.

### AWHS Senior Sunrise

NEW! On Tuesday, August 19, the Class of 2026 will celebrate their last first day of school by gathering to watch the sun come up. Watch for information from AWHS or check the [Class of 2026 webpage](#) for updates.



## Ohio's Tax Holiday Offers Relief

From August 1 - 14, shoppers can avoid paying sales tax on eligible items thanks to the state's annual Sales Tax Holiday. Examples of tax-free purchases include food, clothing, books, sporting goods, home goods and more. [Visit the Ohio Department of Taxation website](#) for full program details.



## Unhoused Families Eligible for Assistance

If your family is experiencing homelessness or is doubled up with friends or extended family members due to loss of housing or financial hardship, your children may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Act. Contact your child's school counselor or call 419-877-5377 for more information.



## Free and Reduced School Meal Applications

Families meeting certain federal income guidelines can [apply to receive free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch](#) through the National School Lunch Program. Applications are available through [PaySchoolsCentral.com](#).



NOTE: New applications are required each school year.

Questions can be directed to Megan Menchaca, Food Service Director at [mmenchaca@anthonywayneschools.org](mailto:mmenchaca@anthonywayneschools.org).

## Neighborhood Bridges: Registration Sweepstakes

We are proud to partner with [Neighborhood Bridges](#) to support AW children and families. Please consider signing up to receive notifications about opportunities for kindness as they arise. When you register before August 13, you will be entered to win a single-game Fullbackers parking permit or two VIP tickets to a home football game. [Enter to win here.](#)



**Since its inception in 2023, we've provided \$37,645 in assistance to 462 students right here in our community!**

# Help Us Maintain a Safe School Community

**STOP** means **STOP** for school buses

***Racing past the arm puts young lives in danger.***



**YELLOW FLASHING LIGHTS =**  
Prepare to stop



**RED FLASHING LIGHTS &  
EXTENDED STOP ARM =**  
Stop at least 10 feet away & wait  
for the lights to stop

## Bus Rider Safety

Stay far from the road when waiting for the bus.

Wait for the driver's signal before crossing, and look both ways for traffic.

Stay seated, keep aisles clear, and avoid eating or drinking on the bus.

## Crosswalk Safety

The Whitehouse Police Department created [an instructional video](#) for using lighted crosswalk zones in our community. Please watch it with your child.

**Please watch for children walking and biking to and from school.**

**VISITORS**  
**PLEASE USE**  
**MAIN ENTRANCE**  
**AND REGISTER**  
**AT OFFICE**

## School Visitors

Visitors to our schools are asked to sign in the main office using our VisitU system with a photo ID.

## Deliveries to School

If you are dropping off an item for your student, please let the office staff know and place it in the designated area in the lobby. We will deliver it for you.

## Add to Your Contacts



## Have a Safety Concern? Please Tell Us!

It is a top priority that our schools are a safe and secure place to learn. If you have concerns, or see/hear something unsafe, please report immediately.

**In the case of an emergency, please dial 9-1-1.**

# 988

## SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

# Eight Tips for Easing into a New School Year

As a new school year begins, both parents and children face changes that can feel exciting yet overwhelming. With a little planning and support, families can ease the transition and start the year off with confidence and calm. If you have concerns or need extra support, connect with your child's school counselor.



## Start Routines Early

Gradually shift bedtime and wake-up times a week or two before school starts. Do a few practice runs for school mornings to reduce chaos on day one.



## Get Organized

Create a calendar for school events, homework deadlines, and extracurriculars. Label school supplies, backpacks, lunch packs and jackets.



## Talk About Expectations

Set academic, social or extra-curricular goals with your child. Discuss any fears or anxieties they may have—especially if it's a new school or grade.



## Communicate with Teachers

Attend back-to-school night. Introduce yourself to teachers and let them know about any special needs or concerns.



## Build a Healthy Home Routine

Plan regular meal times and include nutritious snacks and lunches. Limit screen time and encourage reading or outdoor play in the evenings.



## Encourage Social Connections

Help your child reconnect with school friends before the year starts with a few play dates or meet-ups - especially for younger kids or new students.



## Check In Regularly

Create a habit of asking open-ended questions like: "What was the best part of your day?" or "What's something that made you think today?"



## Give It Time

The transition takes a few weeks. Be patient with your child—and yourself—during this adjustment phase.

# Generals Athletics

After an unforgettable year that rewrote the record books, raised the bar and set the standard the Generals are back, ready to build on that momentum and take things even further. With returning talent, fresh faces, and the same determination that fueled our historic run, this year holds even greater promise. Let's carry the legacy forward. Go Generals!

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## Team Schedules

Generals Athletics uses Dragonfly for its athletics calendars. You can sort events by school, sport and date. There are also links for purchasing tickets directly from the calendar and subscribing to event live stream coverage. [See who's playing:](#) ➡

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## Athletics Admission

Entrance fees for regular season athletic contests are determined by the NLL. [Season pass and single-game admission prices are available online.](#)

Tickets may be purchased online in advance, or are available at the gate.

[Get Your Tickets](#) ➡

## Generals Pride Pass

District residents 60 years or older will receive free admission to regular-season home athletics contests, school plays and musicals. To claim your Generals Pride Pass, bring a photo ID to the Central Administrative Office at 9565 Bucher Road, Whitehouse during regular business hours.

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## AW Athletics Pay-to-Participate Program

Beginning with the Fall 2024 season, the Anthony Wayne Local Schools Board of Education implemented a Pay-to-Participate policy for the District's athletics programs. All fees must be paid before the student-athlete's first match and are non-refundable. [More information is available on the Athletics page of the website.](#)

# Staff Spotlights

We're excited to welcome three outstanding individuals to their new roles at Anthony Wayne Local Schools! Each brings unique skills, fresh perspectives, and a shared commitment to helping our students thrive. From inspiring leadership to creative teaching strategies, they're ready to make a positive impact this year.

Want to celebrate an AWLS employee? Send your Staff Spotlight suggestions to [communications@anthonywayneschools.org](mailto:communications@anthonywayneschools.org).



## **DR. KEVIN PFEFFERLE**

*Assistant Superintendent*

Calling it the right opportunity at the right time, Dr. Pfefferle is ready to broaden his impact. Formerly the AWHS principal, he looks forward to supporting administrators, teachers and staff across the District in their work with students. [As he steps into his new role, he reflected on what makes him most proud - read more.](#)



## **MR. JON BURKE**

*Principal, Anthony Wayne High School*

An experienced educator and proud AW parent, Jon is now stepping into a new role with the same passion and energy that first drew his family to AWLS. [Check out the full story](#) to learn more about his vision for AWHS, his approach to leadership, and maybe even his love for chicken nuggets and Ted Lasso.



## **MRS. LEIGH PANCOAST**

*Assistant Principal, Fallen Timbers Middle School*

Mrs. Pancoast brings energy, experience, and a passion for helping every student succeed. She's excited to jump into our house system and connect with families. Want to know her surprising hidden talent — or her favorite food she puts on everything? [Keep reading to learn more about her!](#)



## Family Week: Generals Found!

There are some amazing hide and seek players in our community! Many thanks to all who participated in this year's Find the General scavenger hunt and to AWHs Art Teacher, Bryan DeKay for printing the action figures, and community members Terri Massucci and Karen Gerhardinger for hiding them.



Congrats to our students who attended the FCCLA National Leadership Conference, bringing home five top 3 and two top 10 awards.

**Read the story.**



## Generals In the News

[New Toledo Jeep Fest feature to highlight connection between Jeeps, dogs](#)

[National, local fellowships fund Ohio public teachers' research in Iceland](#)

[Local student attends national educators conference](#)

[Festival's 2025 poster celebrates the imprint art makes on people's lives](#)

[Local alums take on new coaching challenges](#)

[AW alum Kenzie Abodeely makes the Cleveland Cavaliers dance team](#)

[Anthony Wayne's Charley Gardner commits to BGSU volleyball](#)

[2025 high school football coaches roundtable](#)

[Anthony Wayne football holds annual Victory Day](#)

## About The Mirror Newspapers

We are saddened to hear of the closing of The Mirror which has served our community with dedication and integrity for so many years. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the entire Mirror team for their thoughtful and consistent coverage of our schools. Your reporting has helped keep families informed, celebrated student achievements, and strengthened the bond between our schools and the community.

[Our condolences are with publisher Michael McCarthy's family and friends.](#)